

Section IV: Promoting Effectively

To share the work of the partnership in the community and maintain enthusiasm for the partnership, consider ways to promote the activities and their benefits. The partnership is affecting the lives of our youth and the future of our community. Recognizing members is one of the best ways to promote the partnership and create goodwill. Always remember to thank and recognize the members of the group for their investment of time, effort, resources, and ideas. See Figure 4.1 for a sample thank you letter.

Recognizing Members

Members are not paid, so reward and recognition become critical. The best types of rewards or recognition are those that can increase productivity, improve the group's interaction, and increase member satisfaction. The strategies do not need to be elaborate. Most members are willing to attend regularly and work hard as long as their talents are used in tasks that involve them in the group, their recommendations are seriously considered, and they are given feedback about their recommendations and efforts. One of the best rewards is to ask for advice and respond to it.

The following strategies are some that have been used by partnerships to reward and recognize members:

- Issue press release and photographs announcing member appointments.
- Report at meetings the ways the group has been of service.
- Invite members to visit programs to see the results of recommendations.
- Invite members to attend special events.
- Send personal letters to members about the results of their advice and recommendations.
- Place members' names on a display board or plaque at the school.
- Be sure the announcements and reports made by administrators about the partnership include references to the members.
- Send a personal note in recognition of special events such as birthdays, and promotions.
- Hold a recognition dinner or reception each year to thank members.
- Send a letter of appreciation to each member's supervisor and/or company, explaining the good job being done by the member and thanking the company for its support.

Recognizing Members

Figure 4.1
Expiration of Term Membership Thank You Letter

[Partnership Letterhead]

Date

Ms. Jane Doe
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms. Doe:

This is to express my sincere gratitude for your contributions to the (name) Partnership.

Your expertise has been appreciated by all who have worked with you, and the program has benefited tremendously from your work. Your support has enabled us to put forward many proposals for the growth of education in our community.

On behalf of the (name) Partnership, we thank you again for your commitment to the work of the (blank) Partnership. We look forward to working with you again in the future.

Sincerely,

Partnership Officer

cc: Administrator/Board Member

Creating Public Awareness

Partnerships sponsor and contribute to many activities during the year. Some of the easiest ways to promote events and recognize the group's contributions are:

Displays, exhibits, open house, and tours

- All are excellent ways to attract attention for the partnership. Video tapes and slide presentations of these events could be used at other times.

Newsletters

- Can be used to promote activities, schedule of events, and partnership updates. Distribute newsletters on a regular basis, whether monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly. Send copies to students, parents of students, community members, partnership members, and any other stakeholders.

Newspaper Publicity

- Publicity is free while advertising is purchased. Invite the press to newsworthy events such as open house, legislative visits or tours, and skills contests. Custom write news releases to your local newspapers' specifications and find out their deadline dates.

Radio and Television

- Use public service announcements. Find radio and television stations that promote community events. Use the community's education cable television station.

The group may want to develop a formal promotional plan at the beginning of the year and assign responsibilities to members. A promotional plan typically consists of the following information:

Identify the audience.

- Who are we trying to reach? students, parents, partnership members, all stakeholders.

Set goals and objectives for the promotional plan.

- Will it recognize members' contributions, changes made due to the group's recommendations; partnership sponsored activities?

Describe the plan succinctly and put the plan in writing.

- Not all activities or contributions will need to be publicized. Choose two or three that showcase the partnership and decide how and when to promote those.

Develop a promotional budget.

- Consider in the planning stage what costs may be incurred such as, how will postage and paper costs be paid? Who will pay the cost of a reception or dinner?

Decide on the appropriate types of communication to be used.

- If you are having an open house, will you use all public service announcements, a flyer, a newsletter, invitations or a combination?

Outline performance indicators for evaluating the promotion plan.

- How many people attended the open house? How did they hear about it—invitation, radio, newsletter?

Public Awareness